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PSB D-46  
July 6, 1953

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USE OF AMERICAN INFLUENCES IN SUPPORT OF U. S. OBJECTIVES  
IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS

I. MISSION.

To establish broad psychological objectives and a framework of procedures for the effective use of U.S. power and influence leading to the crystallization of national military and political forces in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, to a more effective free world support for these forces and to the ensuing denial of those countries to Soviet Bloc control.

II. ANALYSIS OF PROBLEM.

1. The Vietminh, using nationalism as a cover, is the most effective agent of Communist expansion in Southeast Asia. It can be beaten only by truly national movements supported by the free world. PSB D-23 establishes a strategy to create a climate of victory in SEA based on the central concept of the development of programs in Thailand. It refers to an increased effort of the French and of the people of the Associated States. The "French Union" overt military structure in Indochina constitutes the principal and indispensable nucleus of opposition to the Vietminh. If the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are to be spared Communist domination, they must accept French support, and the French must be ready to continue it.

2. France, on the other hand, may remain an "oppressor", thereby sacrificing the last remnants of its military and political prestige; it may accept an ignominious defeat at the hands of Communism; or it must - and we hope it will - undertake a role new to its colonial practice if not to its national tradition - that of an active liberator. The difficulties of the psychological readjustments necessary on both sides at a time when France is weak and overextended and the Vietnamese subject to Communist temptations, are obvious. More is needed than further promise of independence - desirable as such a promise was. Postures of colonialism and of military

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apathy inherited from the past may still prevent such a promise from being fulfilled, and will most probably frustrate its implementation.

3. Paper "concessions" remain a dead letter in the absence of a consistent French policy. Political decisions affecting Indochina are made by default, or, like the move of July 3, 1953, under the pressure of circumstances. As long as individuals and groups responsible for the making and the implementation of policies operate under obsolete doctrines, divergent and demoralizing influences and lack a common purpose, the situation will not change fundamentally. French military power will continue to be misused, popular support in France and in Vietnam will be lacking and the Vietminh position will improve day after day.

4. There are, however, positive elements in this situation: the emerging nationalism of the local populations, the distrust and fear of the Chinese on the part of the natives of Southeast Asia, the French desire for "a change", the steps of the French Government, which, taken grudgingly as they were, are in the direction of independence and the very "atomism" of French-Indochinese policies which weakens these policies but also exposes many targets to U.S. influence. Propaganda must be used, but time is lacking to wait until either propaganda alone or the logic of the situation has brought new attitudes.

### III. CONCLUSIONS.

1. There is an expeditious way through which the U.S. can foster a new doctrine of relations between France and the Associated States, and inject in the policies affecting Indochina a sense of common purpose. The way is to influence directly and promptly the key persons who participate in or, in turn, influence the making and the implementation of policies pertaining to Indochina.

2. This influence must be exerted in the direction of a firmer military posture on the part of the French and of the peoples

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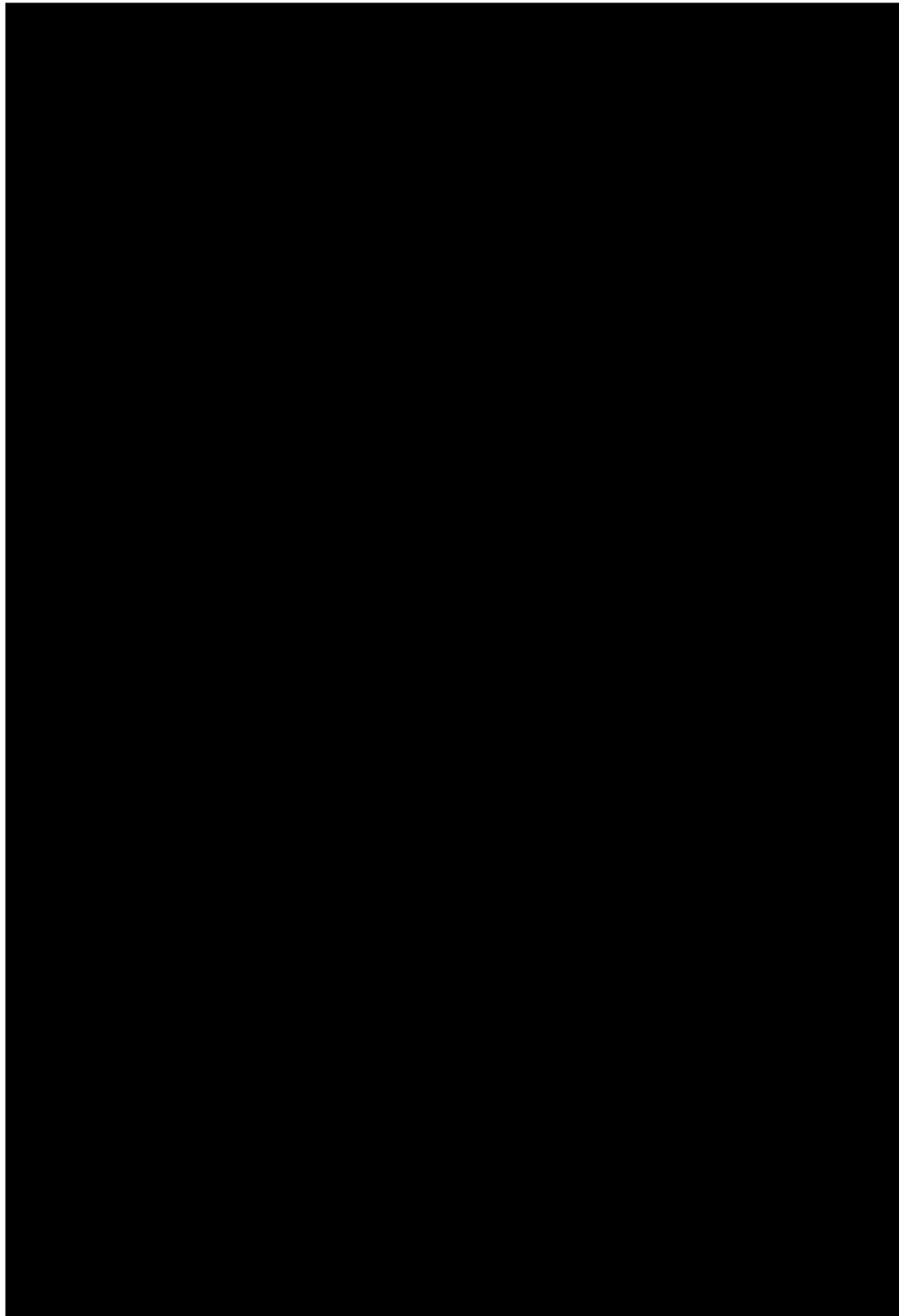
of Indochina, combined with simultaneous active recognition by the former of the latter's national aspirations. It must seek recognition in the free world for the legitimate governments of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

3. Individualized methods of influence must be supplemented by appropriate 25X1C10a [REDACTED] propaganda programs.

4. Any such programs of propaganda and influence must be coordinated with the development of diplomatic moves and policies of the U.S. Government, and with the extension of military support and of economic aid to Indochina. All these applications of U.S. power must remain under a common policy guidance.

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2. Coordination with diplomatic moves.

Furthermore all actions provided by this plan must be taken in relation to U.S. diplomatic moves. Information collected in the course

of the plan's implementation is to be used to guide the formation of a U.S. position in negotiations related to Indochina.

#### D. IMPLEMENTATION.

The standard provisions for coordination, review, evaluation, and logistic support will apply to this Plan.

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Psychological Strategy Board (via PP/PY/Ln 1309 K)

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